

# FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number    USGS Quad    Area(s)    Form Number

14-216

Orleans

EAS.1269

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

**Town/City:** EASTHAM

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*): Eastham Center

## Photograph



**Address:** 110 Crosby Village Road

**Historic Name:** Alton and Harriet Crosby Cottage

**Uses:** Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

**Date of Construction:** [1952-1971], poss. older

**Source:** USGS Aerial Survey

**Style/Form:** Craftsman

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

**Exterior Material:**

Foundation: Concrete block piers

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

**Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:**

None

**Major Alterations** (*with dates*):

None on record

**Condition:** Good

**Moved:** no ☒    yes ☐    **Date:**

**Acreage:** 0.68 acres

**Setting:** Crosby Village Road is a narrow dirt track extending off Bridge Road. This porkchop parcel is located on the east side of Herring Pond and is largely obscured from public view. The parcel is open with lawn and minimal foundation plantings around the house, and the parcel otherwise remains forested. The parcel slopes down behind the house to the pond. The surrounding area includes a mix of houses built from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant, for

**Organization:** Eastham Historical Commission

**Date** (*month / year*): April 2025

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

110 CROSBY VILLAGE ROAD

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

*Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.*

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

*Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.*

The Alton and Harriet Crosby House, built in ca. 1952-1971, is a small, pond-front example of a Craftsman cottage. Its form consists of a one-story side-gable main block, an ell with a low-pitched shed roof on the rear (east) elevation, and a screen porch of the same size across the pond-front elevation. The house appears to rest on concrete block pilings. The foundation is much more exposed under the porch and is covered with wood boards. The elevations are clad in wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles and has deeply projecting open eaves. Windows all appear to be modern, 1/1 replacements. The main entrance is located on the south side elevation, accessed from a wood deck.

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

*Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.*

Incorporated as Nauset Plantation in 1646, and changed to Eastham in 1651, Eastham territory originally extended south to Pleasant Bay in Orleans and north beyond Wellfleet Harbor. The early development pattern for what we now know as Eastham was impacted by its absence of deep-water harbor facilities. Relatively fertile soil led to dispersed agricultural settlement, but residential and commercial development was concentrated to the north at Wellfleet Harbor and to the south at Town Cove and Pleasant Bay. When the separate towns of Wellfleet and Orleans were created in the late-18<sup>th</sup> century, Eastham became and remained one of the least populated towns on the Cape throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Eastham was the agricultural center of the Outer Cape. Crops evolved over time; corn and dairy were surpassed in the early-20<sup>th</sup> century by asparagus and turnips - two crops well suited for the sandy soil. In 1900, 58% of Eastham's workers were employed as farmers, but by 1930 that number had dwindled to 21%. Summer resort development, including cottage colonies and subdivisions of former farmland that would transform Eastham, had begun in earnest in the 1920s as middle-class access to car ownership increased and Cape roads were improved.

This property and the adjacent parcel at 100 Crosby Village Road (EAS.1268) are owned jointly and have the same title history. These two properties were part of a 4-acre parcel that was sold in 1891 by Mary Higgins of Eastham, wife of Snow Higgins and formerly widow of Charles H. Smith. The parcel was described as bounded on the north by land of William H. Nickerson, on the east by land of the Cape Cod Railroad Co., on the south by land of Austin E. Cole, and on the west by Coles Herring Pond (now Herring Pond). The land was sold to Jennie E. Crosby, wife of Forester J. Crosby, and formerly widow of Henry D. Smith.<sup>1</sup>

Jennie E. Clark (1875-1936) was born in Eastham to farmer John A. and Tamson (Gill) Clark. Jennie Clark first married Henry D. Smith in Eastham in 1895. After his death in 1898, she married Nova Scotia-born Forester John Crosby in 1901. William H. Nickerson, whose land abutted this parcel to the north, was married to Jennie's sister, Tamson A. (Clark) Nickerson.

Forester Crosby was a shell fisherman (1910 census) and then coast guard surfman (1920, 1930 census). Both properties have remained in the Crosby family. Following Jennie Crosby's death, they were conveyed to her son, Alton C. Crosby in 1945. He worked as a shell fisherman (1930 census), special police (1940 census) and house carpenter (1950 census). In 1988, Alton and his wife, Harriet, conveyed the properties jointly to themselves and their daughter, Pamela (Crosby) Ryder of Morrisville, VT, and the properties were conveyed outright to Pamela Ryder in 1990.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Book 254/Page 18.

<sup>2</sup> Book 6331/ Page 60, Book 7106/ Page 146.

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The question remains when each of the cottages was built. This cottage on the pond at 110 Crosby Village Road has an Assessor date of 1924, and the cottage at 100 Crosby Village Road has an Assessor date of 1938. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) conducted a series of aerial photographic surveys between 1938 and 2020. The 1938 USGS photo survey appears to show one cottage set back from the pond in the location of the cottage at 100 Crosby Village Road. The cottage at the pond edge is not shown on the 1952 aerial survey but is present on the 1971 survey (Photos 2 and 3). It is possible that this cottage is the older of the two and is the one shown in the 1938 USGS survey and was later moved to this location sometime after 1952, but there is no evidence to date of that possibility.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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Wilding, Don. *A Brief History of Eastham*. Charleston, SC: History Press, 2017.

[www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) - Vital records.



Photo 2. 1952 USGS aerial photo (arrow added).

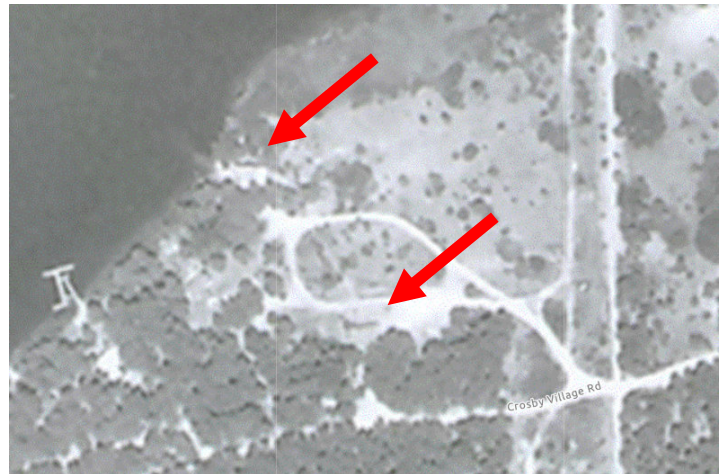


Photo 3. 1971 USGS aerial photo (arrows added).



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Photo 4. View looking east.



Photo 5. View looking southeast.



Photo 6. View looking south.